

access a database for obtaining other and/or additional information relevant to such data, as recited expressly in similar language in all independent claims 1, 5, 10, 11 and 15. Therefore, the data is intercepted after it arrives the print spool. With the teaching of the present invention, an application software sending the data to the printer via the print spool is not aware that the data will be intercepted and further processed after it arrives the print spool. From the point of the view of such application software, the print spool is feeding its data directly to the printer (see lines 13-15, page 2 of the original Specification).

Applicant respectfully disagrees with the assertion of the Examiner that the present invention as defined in independent claims 1, 5, 10, 11 and 15 is obvious over the combination of Warmus and Barnes. In particular, Applicant respectfully disagrees with the assertion of the Examiner that such a combination may teach to intercept data which is being sent to a printer from a print spool, and to use such intercepted data as an index key to access a database for obtaining other and/or additional information, as explained in more detail below.

First of all, Applicant believes that a brief explanation of the relevant disclosure of Warmus is helpful in understanding the patentably distinguishing features of the present invention. Warmus discloses a technique to create different versions of books, each of which comprises a common “fixed information” and different “variable information”. As shown in Figure 5, template files 106 are used to create stripped master page files 120 (for generating master page files 124 having the fixed information) and stripped variable page files 126 (for generating final variable page files 139 having the variable information). Intermediate page files 130, 132 are produced from the stripped variable page files 126 and define the position of the variable information that is to be produced on the pages. The intermediate page files 130, 132 further include data identifying the entries in the variable information database 108, which is used to obtain the variable information from the database 108 (see

col. 8, lines 52-65) to generate final variable page files 139. Finally, the master page files 124 (having the fixed information), the final variable page files 139 (having the variable information) and the press command file 140 are sent to the print system 79 for printing merged files. It shall be noted that the print system 79 in Fig. 5 (also shown in Fig. 4) represents the demand printing system 62a-62c shown in Fig. 3 (see col. 6, lines 43-44), which prints the merged files as the printed pages before forwarding them to a finishing apparatus 66. The finishing apparatus 66 includes one or more ink jet printers 72 for printing additional customized information such as addressee information on each book and one or more label printers 74 for printing address labels (see col. 6, lines 31 – 35).

However, Walrus never teaches or implies to intercept data after the data arrives a print spool, and even never mentions a print spool. Applicant is fully aware that a print spool is a common element in printer systems, such as the print manager spooler in Barnes cited by the Examiner, which temporarily saves data of a print job in a queue before forwarding it to the printer. Nonetheless, incorporation of a print spool into the disclosure of Walrus cannot reach a teaching that the data is intercepted after it arrives a print spool, because there is no motivation or suggestion in Barnes to intercept the data after it arrives a print spool (note that the print spool works only for queuing print jobs). To the contrary, as most clearly shown in Fig. 5 in Walrus, the interception of the data (from the intermediate page files 130, 132) so to identify and obtain variable information from the variable information database happens even before the final variable page files 139 are formed (obviously, no print spool, if any, is involved before the final variable page files 139 are formed).

Moreover, Applicant respectfully disagrees with the assertion of the Examiner that the data is intercepted when it is sent from a print spool to the ink jet printer 72 in the finishing apparatus. In Walrus, there are two print systems (as shown in Fig. 3). One comprises the demand printing system 62a-62c (or 79 in Figs. 4 & 5) for printing merged files (comprising both fixed information and

variable information) as desired printed pages, the other comprises the printers (e.g., ink jet printer 72 and label printer 74) included in the finishing apparatus 66 for printing additional customized information such as addressee information and address labels (see col. 6, lines 29-35). However, unlike the assertion of the Examiner, there is no teaching or implication that any data is intercepted somewhere between a print spool (if any) and the ink jet printer 72, and is used to obtain from a database the additional customized information (e.g., the addressee information) to be printed by the ink jet printer 72. In fact, Walms does not teach to intercept any data anywhere for obtaining the additional customized information from any database. Apparently the Examiner has misinterpreted the additional customized information to be printed by the ink jet printer 72 as the additional variable information (read as "other information" in claim 1) obtained from the database 108. However, as explained above, the data intercepted from intermediate page file 130, 132 is used to obtain the variable information from the variable information database 108 so as to form the final variable page files 139 (which will be printed by the demanding printing system 62 or 79), and such obtained variable information has nothing to do with the additional customized information (e.g., the addressee information) to be printed by the ink jet printer 72. By the way, contrary to the assertion of the Examiner that only the fixed pages are printed in the demanding printer system 62 (see Office Action, page 7), both fixed information and variable information have already been printed by the demanding printing systems 62 (or 79) as printed pages before they are further forwarded to the finishing apparatus 66 for assembling and for being printed with the addressee information by the ink jet printer 72 (see col. 6, lines 25-29). Therefore, such variable information is clearly not the additional customized information to be printed by the ink jet printer 72.

Therefore, Applicant believes that the present invention as defined in independent claims 1, 5, 10, 11 and 15 are not obvious over a combination of Walms and Barnes under 35USC §103(a).

Moreover, Applicant has reviewed cited Ikenoue (US Patent No. 5,987,127) and cannot find a teaching of intercepting data which is being sent from a print spool to a printer either. Therefore, Applicant believes that independent claims 1, 5, 10, 11 and 15 are patentable over the combinations of the cited patents.

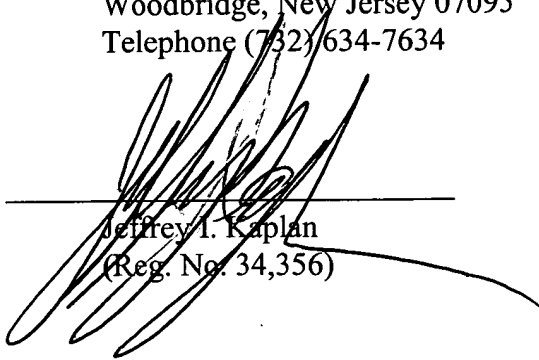
At least for the same reasons, dependent claims 2-4, 6-9, 12-14 and 16-18 are also believed patentable, as each of them includes all the limitations of one of the independent claims 1, 5, 11 and 15.

The applicant therefore respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance in view of the above remarks. The Examiner is authorized to deduct additional fees believed due from our Deposit Account No. 11-0223.

Respectfully submitted,

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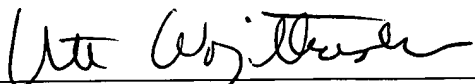

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Signed



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